

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**Monday, December 14, 1998**

Present: June Bailey, Lucy Burnett, Bob Martz, and M.S. Mitchell,

Absent: Pat Consolver, Leon Robinson, and William Sanders

Also Present: Gaylord Dold, Beth King, James Ruane, Steve Freach, and Maryann Crockett, Janice McKinney, Tim Vanatta (staff)

**AGENDA**

President Burnett called the meeting to order at approximately 3:35 p.m. The minutes of the regular meeting of November 9, 1998, were approved.

1. **Use of College Hill Park.** Staff briefly reviewed the item stating that they had received a complaint from Gaylord Dold regarding students at Blessed Sacrament School using College Hill Park for recess and whether that constituted exclusive use of the park. Staff said Mr. Dold had also expressed concern about the condition of the turf in the area the children have been playing soccer, kick ball and other games and that he had also mentioned the amount of candy wrappers and other trash that was being left in the park. As background, it was explained that the playground and soccer fields at Blessed Sacrament had been resodded last year and that during that school term the school was allowed to use a portion of the park as a school playground. Mr. Freach clarified that there had also been sewer construction in the school playground area.

Beth King, CPO Council 2, introduced James Ruane, President, CPO Council 2, and Steve Freach, Blessed Sacrament School Board. Gaylord Dold, a resident of the College Hill Park area, introduced himself and passed out two maps of the park. He detailed his concerns regarding the student's use of the park. He said he believed the turf at the park was suffering from overuse. There was considerable discussion regarding park usage and turf management. Staff reviewed a letter written to the Principal of Blessed Sacrament requesting that since there appeared to be adequate playground space for outdoor activities at Blessed Sacrament, and since Park maintenance staff had determined that the turf at the area of the park in question would need to be reseeded due to overuse, that Blessed Sacrament discontinue use of College Hill Park for their morning and afternoon school recesses. It was also noted that the park was scheduled for reseeding in late March or early April, 1999.

James Ruane stated that they were against any policy that restricted use of the park by students. Staff explained that this area of the park was designed for more passive use. The Board unanimously agreed that parks needed to be open to all citizens; however, members also expressed concern regarding "unconditional" park use and said that abuse and overuse of park areas were also important issues. There was brief discussion concerning changing the use of that area within the park and the need to install a different type of turf and recondition the surface. Beth King and Steve Freach said the

school would be willing to partner with the Park Department and offered to provide grass seed. They indicated that they would revisit the issue with the pastor and Blessed Sacrament School Board. June Bailey suggested the group work with park staff regarding turf management issues and reseeded. She also suggested providing students environmental education about park land including design, use and the different types of turf needed for passive use versus high use activities.

2. **Discussion of Ralph Wulz Riverside Tennis Center Proposal.** Staff reported that a proposal on the tennis center was scheduled to go to the City Council the next day, December 15. Staff briefly explained proposed facility improvements and discussed other issues including marketing, development of a business plan and development of a Community Tennis Association (CTA) to attract tournaments from the Missouri Valley Conference and United States Tennis Association.
3. **Expansion of Parking Lot at Herman Hill Park/Police South Substation.** Staff reported that the Police Department had requested the addition of 15 parking spaces to the substation parking lot located at Herman Hill Park. Staff said they will have to remove one Osage Orange tree, relocate 5 trees, reconstruct a portion of the irrigation system on the west side of the parking lot and move one frisbee golf tee. Staff explained that construction of the additional parking was at no cost to the Park Department; however, Park staff would provide tree removal, tree relocation and irrigation repair for the project, with the assistance of Public Works staff.

On motion by Bailey, second by Martz, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to approve the expansion of the parking lot at Herman Hill Park/Police South Substation as presented.

4. **General Discussion of Facility Consultant Report.** Staff distributed a copy of the Park Board facility ratings and an overview of the ratings. Staff commented that the overview was prepared to assist the Board in prioritizing projects for further consideration. It was the general consensus of the Board that they needed more time to review the data. It was suggested that staff set up a special meeting or workshop with facility consultant, Ron Vine, sometime after the first of the year.

#### **OFF-THE-AGENDA ITEMS**

1. **Condition of Low Water Bridge at Pawnee Prairie Park.** Bob Martz reported that he had received another call concerning the condition of the low water bridge at Pawnee Prairie Park. Staff responded that they would investigate and correct the situation.
2. **Processing of City Council Agenda Reports.** June Bailey said she wanted to “go on record” as saying that she had a problem with the processing of Council Agenda reports and specifically referred to the proposed Charter Ordinance amendment that was on the December 8 City Council Agenda. There was brief discussion. Bob Martz asked if there was some type of regulation or review process for such items, particularly by the Department involved. Mitchell commented that he felt the Board should have been given the opportunity to study the issue and take action on it. He said the current process hampers the effectiveness of the Board.
3. **Payment of Special Assessments at Wildwood Park.** June Bailey referred board members to Council Proceedings dated November 17, 1998. She said she questioned the payment of

\$65,000.00 from the Park Department budget to pay special assessments for paving roads around land leased by the City from the Board of Education (BOE/USD #259) at 27th and Richmond for a neighborhood park. She said she had spoken with Councilman Bill Gale and requested the Board's permission for she and Mr. Gale to meet with the School Board and request that the land be donated to the City. It was the general consensus that the Board had no problem with Bailey's request.

4. **Report on Park Department Facility Maintenance Estimated Costs.** M.S. Mitchell asked if staff had prepared a response to his request for information concerning maintenance of park facilities made at the November meeting. Staff distributed a rough cost estimate on facility maintenance. They noted that in many ways the reorganization had worked well and said park shelters, recreation centers and bathhouses had for the most part received better repair due in part to the fact that Public Works had more resources at their disposal, including access to Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and Capital Investment Maintenance Program (CIMP) funds. It was further noted; however, that custodial services at park facilities were a problem and that contracts let by Public Works for custodial services were not responsive to recreation center programming needs or rental arrangements at shelter buildings. Staff suggested that the Park Department be allowed input into the Request for Proposal (RFP) process and perhaps some oversight of custodial services to ensure that the needs of park patrons were met and that cleanliness of park facilities was maintained.

Mitchell commented that park facilities were in bad shape. He mentioned items such as paint and other repair work. There was brief discussion concerning roof repair at Botanica. There was also mention of the Task Force that was being formed after the first of the year to study maintenance issues.

5. **Request for establishment of a playground at the Police Training Center.** June Bailey reported that she had met with Terry Weatherson, Sherwood Glen Neighborhood Association, regarding the possibility of establishing a playground at the Police Training Center. She said she told Mr. Weatherson she did not believe the project was eligible for the City's matching playground equipment program since the City leases the training center and land from the Board of Education (BOE/USD #259). She suggested that the BOE might donate a portion of the land to the City, but also mentioned safety issues related to the proposed playground location.
6. **Wichita Park Alliance (WPA) request for a joint meeting with the Park Board.** Staff reported that the WPA had requested a joint meeting with the Board to discuss the future direction of the Alliance.

On motion Mitchell, second Martz, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to meet with the Wichita Park Alliance Board January 20, 1999, at 12:00 Noon, location to be announced.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:00 p.m.

Park Board 12/14/98 (contd.)

ATTEST:

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Maryann Crockett, Clerk